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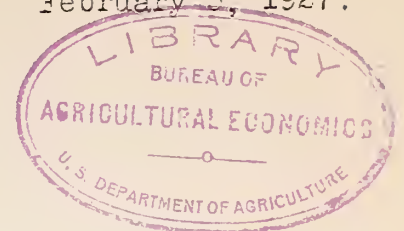


UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Bureau of Agricultural Economics  
Washington

F.S.  
HE-23

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FEB 15 1927  
FOREIGN NEWS ON HEMP

February 5, 1927.



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THE ITALIAN HEMP SITUATION

The downward tendency in prices which prevailed in the Italian hemp market during 1924 and 1925 was continued during 1926, according to a report received in the Department of Agriculture from the office of the American Commercial Attache at Rome. The hemp market opened in January 1926 at \$14.47 per 100 pounds for first quality hemp as compared with \$19.85 per 100 pounds in January 1925. By the end of July 1926 prices had declined to \$13.58 and at the close of 1926 good quality hemp was bringing only \$8.82 per 100 pounds.

The depressed condition of the textile industry in general acted as a drag on the market and farmers were urged to reduce the acreage sown to hemp in the spring of 1926. While there was a small reduction in acreage in the Ferrara district, farmers on the whole refused to heed the warning. Official figures for the 1926 Italian hemp acreage show an area of 259,776 acres as compared with 275,517 acres in 1925, a reduction of only about 5 per cent. The growing season was favorable and an abundant crop of long, strong-fibered hemp was obtained. The yield in fiber amounted to 267,242,000 pounds as compared with 275,150,000 pounds in 1925. Farmers, unacquainted with the world hemp market situation, refused to sell their product at what they considered unremunerative prices, and in the meantime the market continued to decline.

Exports of raw and combed hemp for the first nine months of 1926 amounted to 77,597,070 pounds as compared with 60,574,000 pounds in the corresponding period of 1925, while exports of tow amounted to 28,603,060 pounds as against 19,002,000 pounds the year before, showing that low prices in the domestic market encouraged exports. Exports of hemp yarn during this nine month period totaled 8,582,000 pounds as against 10,356,000 pounds in 1925, and of hemp textiles 540,000 pounds as compared with 829,000 pounds the year before.

In view of the critical situation in the Italian hemp market, the Hemp Growers Consortium issued the following program toward the end of 1926: (1) Reduction of hemp acreage; (2) greater attention to seed selection and an export embargo on seeds; (3) standardization of the product; (4) credit for hemp farmers. Hemp farmers now are being urged to plant less hemp during the spring of 1927 and to devote the area not sown to hemp to sugar beets. Suggestions are also being made that hemp should be used as a substitute for imported jute. The best informed element in the hemp industry considers that the only solution to the Italian situation is the development of a domestic hemp textile industry, and an export trade in the manufactured products.

The following table gives the average monthly farm price of hemp in Italy during the past four years:



HEMP: Farm prices in Italy  
(In dollars per 100 pounds a/)

Month	1923		1924		1925		1926	
	Hemp	Tow	Hemp	Tow	Hemp	Tow	Hemp	Tow
	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars	Dollars
January	10.23	5.84	12.06	9.00	19.85	14.34	14.47	8.20
February	10.23	5.95	13.84	9.79	18.94	13.53	14.29	7.85
March	10.23	6.47	17.79	13.44	19.12	12.72	13.76	7.06
April	10.23	6.57	17.95	12.55	18.46	12.27	13.50	6.70
May	10.23	6.53	17.56	12.55	17.14	11.01	13.50	6.35
June	10.23	6.47	17.00	11.86	17.50	11.01	13.50	6.35
July	10.23	6.89	15.22	9.88	19.94	11.01	13.58	5.91
August	10.23	7.62	14.32	9.88	20.21	11.01	13.50	6.79
September	11.06	8.14	15.32	10.42	15.83	8.57	12.00	6.00
October	11.79	8.14	16.90	11.17	15.73	8.33	9.35	4.76
November	11.48	7.93	15.62	13.54	14.98	8.66	8.82	4.41
December	12.00	8.24	20.76	14.53	14.70	8.48	8.82	4.76

Source: Office of the American Trade Commissioner at Rome. a/ Converted from lira per quintal to dollars per 100 lbs. at the average exchange value of the lira for the years given.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
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F.S.  
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MAY 31 1927

Foreign News on Hemp

April 28, 1927.

REDUCTION OF HEMP ACREAGE IN SOUTHERN ITALY



Acres planted to hemp this season in southern Italy is less than last year and it is estimated that the 1927 crop will be 20 per cent less, or about 70,500,000 pounds, according to a cable received by the United States Department of Agriculture from Consul Byington stationed at Naples. The reduction is principally in the immediate vicinity of Naples where it is estimated the yield will be 25 per cent less than last year. In the Caserta region the reduction is estimated at 15 per cent while in other districts the yield is expected to be about the same as last season.

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F. S.  
HE-25

May 24, 1927.

FOREIGN NEWS ON HEMP  
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PROSPECTS FOR HEMP CROP IN SOUTHERN ITALY



Prospects for the hemp crop in southern Italy now seem favorable and it is estimated that the shortage in the 1927 crop will not exceed 10 per cent instead of 20 per cent as previously reported, according to a cable received from Consul Byington stationed at Naples. Native hemp seed sown in southern Italy this season has sprouted better than was expected and has come up well, which may partially compensate for the deficiency in area sown. In the absence of destructive storms it would be possible for the crop in this region to reach last year's production of 88,200,000 pounds.

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Washington

F.S.  
HE-26

May 31, 1927.

FOREIGN NEWS ON HEMP

HEMP CROP SITUATION IN SOUTHERN ITALY

Hemp prices in Naples during mid-April were very high because of the strong demand from France, according to a report received in the Department of Agriculture from Vice-Consul Ernest H. Evans at Naples. Domestic producers have become so accustomed to high prices that they are expected to be rather slow in adjusting themselves to the much lower levels now prevailing on the world markets. Producers in South Italy claim that changes due to the appreciation of the lira have not benefited them since all of their expenses in lira currency have remained on the same high level as before. They are, therefore, unwilling to reduce prices as the lira increases in exchange value.

The prevailing high prices in Southern Italy will doubtless cause purchasers to look to Russia and Hungary to supply their needs, states Vice-Consul Evans. Eventually producers will be obliged to accept lower prices. Before doing so, however, it is expected that they will attempt to carry over a large part of the 1926 crop of 44,000 short tons. It is now estimated that the 1927 crop will be about 10 per cent below that of 1926. The stocks carried over from the 1925 crop are estimated to have amounted to about 5,500 short tons. Declared exports of hemp from Naples to the United States during the first four months of 1927 amounted to 62,528 pounds valued at \$12,822 as compared with 33,070 pounds valued at \$5,621 during the corresponding period in 1926.

The following table gives the prices of hemp in Naples on April 29, 1926 and 1927 in lira per quintal and in terms of United States currency per 100 pounds:

HEMP: Prices prevailing in the Naples market, April 29, 1926 and 1927

Quality of hemp	:Italian lira per quintal		:Dollars per 100 pounds	
	: 1926	: 1927	: 1926	: 1927
	: Lira	: Lira	: Dollars	: Dollars
Spago da calzolaio .....	720	580	13.13	11.84
Paesano extra extra I, :				
chiaro .....	690	540	12.58	11.02
Paesano extra I .....	640	510	11.67	10.41
Paesano extra extra :				
acolorato .....	560	450	10.21	9.19
Paesano extra acolorato :	530	430	9.66	8.78
Spontito I .....	950	880	17.32	17.96
Spontito II .....	900	830	16.41	16.94
Spontito III .....	800	730	14.59	14.90
Average price .....	725	618	13.22	12.61



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F.S.  
HE-27

June 18, 1927.

FOREIGN NEWS ON FIBERS

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DROUGHT AFFECTING YUCATAN SISAL CROP

A severe and prolonged drought is checking henequen production in Yucatan, according to a report received in the Department of Agriculture from Vice-Consul Hernan C. Vogenitz in Progreso. Planters express the opinion that both the quantity and quality of fiber will decrease in the continued absence of rainfall. It is stated that the dryness of the henequen plants and leaves is producing a much larger percentage of inferior and stained fiber which is practically unsaleable in the foreign market. Stocks of sisal at Progreso on June 1 amounted to 88,116 bales (a bale weighing between 350 and 400 pounds) as compared with 85,617 bales on June 1, 1926. Stocks at Merida, Campeche, and on plantations were approximately 125,000 bales. Prices during May remained unchanged at 6-7/8 cents per pound compared with 8½ cents per pound last year.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Bureau of Agricultural Economics  
Washington

F.S.  
HE-28

July 6, 1927

FOREIGN NEWS ON HEMP

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IMPROVED PROSPECTS FOR HEMP CROP IN ITALY

Hemp crop prospects in both Northern and Southern Italy this year are said to be very good because of the favorable weather conditions that have prevailed thus far this season, according to reports received in the Department of Agriculture from the American Consuls at Flornece and Naples. A cable just received from the Consul at Florence states that prospects for a good hemp crop in Northern Italy are generally satisfactory. The quantity and quality of the crop are estimated to be about the same as last year although the area under cultivation this year amounts to only about 143,000 acres, which represents a decrease of about 10 per cent compared with 1926.

The hemp seed sown in South Italy this year has sprouted much better than was expected, and plants are growing rapidly because of favorable weather conditions and the fact that the seed used was entirely new and not mixed with old seed, according to Vice-Consul Ernest E. Evans at Naples. Hemp crop prospects in the vicinity of Naples are especially good. Prices in the Naples market are rising almost daily because the quantity offered is less than the demand from France, England and Belgium where spinners are being compelled to substitute hemp for flax because of the difficulty of obtaining flax from Russia.

Maximum productivity in 1927 owing to the use of new hemp seed may partially, and even entirely, make up for the reduced area sown in Southern Italy this year, according to Mr. Evans. It is now estimated that the shortage in yield of 20 per cent previously estimated for the 1927 crop as compared with the 1926 hemp production in South Italy, will be reduced to not more than 10 per cent. Unless there are destructive wind and hail storms later in the season, the 1927 crop may even equal the 44,000 short tons produced in South Italy last year.

During previous years the hemp seed used in South Italy was generally obtained from Asia Minor and Yugoslavia. The seed received last year from foreign sources was poor in quality; fields were often seen with large, almost empty patches where seed did not come up. In other fields patches with a growth of very short hemp were noticeable. Following this experience, producers in South Italy decided to sow home-grown seed taken mostly from the vicinity of Naples. This native seed has not only been much cheaper in price, but it has given better results.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
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F.S.  
HE-29

August 24, 1927.

FOREIGN NEWS ON HEMP

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SOUTH ITALIAN HEMP CROP REDUCED

Continued drought now makes probable a South Italian hemp crop of between 31,000 and 33,000 short tons, or about 30 per cent less than last year, according to a cable from Consul General Byington at Naples. The new crop is not yet on the market and prices on the old crop stocks remain high with no demand.

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Bureau of Agricultural Economics  
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F.S.  
HE-30

October 1, 1927

FOREIGN NEWS ON HEMP

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HEMP CROP IN SOUTHERN ITALY

The hemp crop of Southern Italy for this season is now estimated to be one-third less than last year, according to a cable received in the Bureau of Agricultural Economics from Consul Byington at Naples. Last year's production was estimated at 88,200,000 pounds. The quality of this season's crop is reported to be generally soft and fine. Consul Byington states that for the past ten days there has been no demand in Naples from foreign spinners because of high prices asked by local producers.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
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FOREIGN NEWS ON HEMP

October 12, 1927

ITALIAN HEMP CROP

Hemp production in Northern Italy will be between 20 and 25 per cent less this season than in 1926 according to a report from Consul Haven at Florence, Italy. Last year's hemp production in Northern Italy was estimated at about 143,000,000 pounds. The new hemp crop is in some respects the best since 1917, the color being good, length satisfactory and the fiber free from wind and hail damage, but the fiber lacks somewhat in substance, reports Consul Haven.

The hemp crop in Southern Italy is estimated at not more than 61,700,000 pounds compared with 88,200,000 pounds for last year according to a report from Vice-consul Evans stationed at Naples. The quality of the hemp is reported to be good, soft and fine but the length leaves much to be desired due to a prolonged drought from May to September. The carryover from each year's crop in Southern Italy is estimated to amount to between 11,000,000 and 13,000,000 pounds.

There is practically no demand for South Italian hemp from spinners in France, England and Belgium, who are understood to have sufficient stocks of hemp for the present. Spinners abroad are reported to be unwilling to buy at prices prevailing in Naples, states Vice-consul Evans, and are offering 50 cents to 75 cents per one hundred pounds less than growers in the Naples district are asking.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
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December 10, 1927.

F.S.  
HE-32

FOREIGN NEWS ON MINOR FIBERS

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NOTES ON FLAX FIBER PRODUCTION IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES

Flax fiber production in nine European countries reported to date amounts to 437,592,000 pounds, for this season, compared with 424,004,000 pounds produced in these countries in 1926, which was 35 per cent of the estimated world total for that year. No estimate of production has been received for this season from Russia, the largest flax fiber producing country, but it is reported that the crop will be somewhat below last year's crop, according to a cable received from Acting Agricultural Commissioner Steere at Berlin. Russia produced 647,941,000 pounds of fiber in 1926 or 53 per cent of the estimated world production. Procurements of flax were delayed this season, having begun during the latter part of October, according to Economic Life of October 21, 1927. They proceeded from then on at a rapid rate until the middle of the month when they slackened on account of rainy weather. The quality of the new fiber is said to be very good, much better than last year's fiber.

Poland, the second largest flax fiber producing country, reports a crop of 125,443,000 pounds or about 4,000,000 pounds less than in 1926. Belgium reports a crop of 116,167,000 pounds, an increase of about 39,000,000 pounds over last season. Owing to unfavorable weather conditions in Flanders during August and the first half of September, no scutching could be done before the latter part of month, according to a report from Vice Consul Shermand at Ghent. On the whole, the new crop has suffered considerable damage, this year, on account of heavy rainfalls, and it appears that a large part of it will only be fit for dew-retting. The situation in the linen spinning industry in Belgium was not as favorable during September as it was two months before. Demand, both domestic and foreign, fell off considerably, with the result that several mills were obliged to organize short time. The Belfast weaving mills, however, continued to buy yarns normally for this time of the year. The Czechoslovakian flax crop is reported to be larger than last year's crop which was unusually small. A very small part of this season's crop is classified as of first quality, according to Vice Consul Glassey at Prague. Notwithstanding reduction in acreage of flax in Northern Ireland, it is estimated that production will be higher for this season than in 1926, according to Consul General Bowman at Belfast.

Prospects for this season's flax crop in Latvia are fair in spite of floods in the Luban district, according to Vice Consul Werlich at Riga. New prices as announced by the Latvian Minister of Finance, to be paid by the government monopoly to flax producers for different grades of flax, are from 35 to 300 per cent above the prices paid for last year's crop, according to a report from Assistant Trade Commissioner Norse at Riga. The increase in price is proportionately greater for the lower grades than for the higher grades and as the quality of the year's crop is below average the growers will be benefited more than if this position was reversed. Some growers in Latvia



have undoubtedly held flax produced in 1926 because they were not satisfied with the price paid by the flax monopoly as compared with the world price. Just how much flax has been held is impossible to ascertain, but the quantity is probably small relatively, and whatever was held will now be disposed of, leaving practically no carryover from the 1926 crop into 1927. The demand for flax for export continues to be greater than the monopoly can supply. One almost certain effect of the good flax market and the increase in the price paid to the farmers, will be an increase in the acreage planted to this crop in 1928. The flax working industry has increased considerably in Latvia during the past few years, and the reduced crop, coupled with the increased requirements of local mills, will reduce the exportable surplus to the smallest quantity in several years.

Improvement in flax prices during the first six months of 1927 caused farmers in Esthonia to take more interest in flax production, states Consul Carlson at Tallinn, Esthonia. Owing to high prices, farmers have disposed of practically all of their stocks of flax. Buyers are saying that it is many years since Esthonia's supply of flax has been as low as at the present time.

Efforts are being made to introduce Belgian flax into Egypt to replace "Caladi" or native Egyptian flax which is poor in quality, according to the office of the Commercial Attache in Cairo. Interest in flax has been increasing in Egypt during recent years.

FLAX FIBER: Production in countries reporting for  
1927, average 1909-1913, annual 1924-1927

Country	: Average : : 1909- : : 1913 :	: 1924 : : :	: 1925 : : :	: 1926 : : :	: 1927 : : :	: Per cent : 1927 is : of 1926 :
	: 1,000 : : pounds :	: 1,000 : : pounds :	: 1,000 : : pounds :	: 1,000 : : pounds :	: 1,000 : : pounds :	: Per : cent :
Netherlands .....	17,276:	20,490:	23,925:	23,048:	12,125:	52.6
Belgium .....	51,888:	35,379:	51,352:	76,896:	116,167:	151.1
Bulgaria .....	382:	191:	197:	132:	265:	200.8
Austria .....	7,480:	7,706:	8,277:	7,425:	5,357:	72.1
Czechoslovakia .....	39,143:	27,046:	30,137:	24,339:	28,234:	116.0
Poland .....	47,336:	96,222:	131,912:	131,311:	125,443:	95.5
Lithuania .....	49,703:	71,859:	91,183:	84,607:	84,878:	100.3
Latvia, .....	62,318:	57,708:	66,138:	55,821:	42,636:	76.4
Esthonia .....	49,518:	23,683:	29,983:	20,425:	22,487:	110.1
Total 9 European countries .....	: 325,044:	: 340,284:	: 433,104:	: 424,004:	: 437,592:	: 103.2
Estimated world total:	1,221,000:	1,027,000:	1,307,000:	1,226,000:	:	:

